

Brogniez Family

PHILIP E. BROGNIEZ
10503 ELK POINT LANE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77064

June 10, 1992

David N. Lewis
Vigo County Public Library
One Library Square
Terre Haute, Indiana 47807

Dear Mr. Lewis,

Thanks for the info! Yes, I would like a print of the Tavern photo, can you have it printed as a 8X10? Also, can you send me a photocopy of the drawing of the Peacock Tavern you mentioned?

You asked how Brogniez is pronounced. It is Brōn-yā. Also, I would be glad to send you information on Frantz Brogniez. I am still collecting information at this point. Enclosed is a brief history aimed at his Houston years. When I get something better put together, I'll pass it on.

Also, enclosed is \$15.00 and a copy of your letter to me.

Sorry I have taken my time in replying. Thanks for your help and your willingness to help.

Sincerely,

Philip Brogniez
Philip Brogniez



Philip E. Brogniez
10503 Elk Point Lane
Houston TX 77064

April 25, 1992

Thanks for the four dollars. I am enclosing all the photocopies you requested plus two big bonuses:

1.) C. C. Oakey's account of and photo of (p.558) Frantz Brogniez, and family, which should interest you very much, and it does give important information about the People's Brewing Co.

2.) Circa 1955 photo of the Peacock Tavern that once stood across the street from the People's Brewing with advertisement that is readily discernible in the photo (but not the photocopy) reading: "The People's Br'g Co. Beer." The photo was taken by Jess Smith who died in 1975.

Finally, the Sandborn, 1955 Fire Insurance Maps of Terre Haute show the buildings above that I am discussing but by 1953 the Brewing Co. was called Terre Haute Ice, Fuel, and Cold Storage Corporation, Plant No. 2. Behind it is the Wabash River. This is a drawing, not a photo and appears in Vol. 2, p. 152. On p. 173 is a drawing of the Peacock Tavern. The building (not including porch) was 44 feet long.

Of course, it would be possible to send you a print of the Tavern photo for approximately \$12.00 but it does take quite a bit of staff time.

If you care to respond, I have two statements to make:

- 1.) How is your last name pronounced?
- 2.) If you feel so inclined, we would be happy to receive at this library any family information you might care to contribute to our surname file.

David N. Lewis

David N. Lewis
SpC Research Ass't

Frantz Hector Brogniez

Brewmaster

Frantz was born in Haine-St. Paul, Belgium on October 26, 1860. At the age of eight he began to study music. From this point on, his love of music would be a strong influence on his life. He entered The University of Louvain where he studied engineering and biochemistry and graduated with honors. He also studied bacteriology at the Louis Pasteur Institute in France. Being a very knowledgeable and gifted man he became an internationally recognized as a bacteriologist and microscopist, and was a pioneer developer of advanced scientific techniques and equipment used in fermentation. The first brewing school was established by him in Lichterveld, Belgium, and by the time he was 35 he had his own brewery on the Rue de France in Brussels.

Frantz left Belgium in mid 1896 and settled in Detroit, Michigan. Where he built The Belgian Brewery, which he later lost to two conniving partners while he was in Belgium for the death of his father. The name was changed to the Tivoli Brewery. With the help of friends who knew his abilities, he moved to Terre Haute, Indiana in 1904. There he supervised construction and was brewmaster of the Peoples Brewery.

In 1911 he was offered and accepted the position of Vice President and Brewmaster of the Houston Ice and Brewing Company, which housed the Magnolia Brewery. There, in 1913, his Southern Select Beer won the world's Grand Prize in competition with 4096 beers entered from 4068 breweries from all over the world in the

International Exposition in Ghent, Belgium. Also in 1913, he along with Miss Ima Hogg and Mrs. E.B. Parker founded the Houston Symphony Orchestra Association.

He remained in Houston until Prohibition in 1923. During that period he was brewmaster for a small brewery in Juarez and commuted daily from El Paso. When Prohibition ended in 1933, he came back to Houston and was made President and Brewmaster of Gulf Brewing Company. Howard Hughes built the Gulf Brewery, on the Hughes Tool property using Frantz's plans. His plans included many new innovations such as the first glass lined aging tanks. There he brewed Grand Prize Beer (named for the Grand Prize he won) until his death two years later on October 9, 1935.

While at the Magnolia Brewery he also brewed Richelieu, a dark beer, which he also brewed in Juarez. Another note, his Grand Prize beer was virtually the same beer as his pre-Prohibition Southern Select.

So, there was a time when the world's best beer was brewed, sold and consumed right here in Texas, in downtown Houston!